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SUBJECT: BOTH KIRCHNERS NOW ON THE WARPATH: "WE WILL NOT
BE CRUSHED"

REF: (A) BUENOS AIRES 2346 (B) BUENOS AIRES 2345 (C)

BUENOS AIRES 2336 (D) BUENOS AIRES 2331

¶1. (SBU) Summary and Introduction: President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner (CFK) and her husband, former president Nestor Kirchner (NK), came out swinging against the United States -- she in Montevideo, he in Buenos Aires -- on December 18, hours before the Ambassador was scheduled to meet with FM Taiana at this summons. Nestor Kirchner disputed the Ambassador's assertion that bilateral relations were positive, and said U.S. actions were "shameful." End summary.

Pouring Kerosene on the Fire

¶2. (SBU) At the December 18 Mercosur summit in Montevideo, CFK reiterated her harsh criticism of the U.S. (reftels) for implicating her in the case of four Venezuelans and one Uruguayan charged with operating as unregistered foreign agents. Repeating her line about the U.S. wanting "subordinate client states," she added, "They will not crush us, we will continue struggling for the deepening of Mercosur, we will continue lobbying for a multipolar world."

¶3. (SBU) CFK said the top priority for Argentina's pro tempore presidency of Mercosur, which began at this summit, was the incorporation of the BRV into the customs union.

¶4. (SBU) Without naming the United States, CFK said "there are some who make politics from within and from outside our countries who are those who make dirty politics and operations in the region." She noted that Latin America had "managed to survive the neoliberal tragedy. It managed to survive the adoption of neoliberal policies. We were a laboratory, we were guinea pigs for policies designed to make the state disappear."

The First Gentleman Surfaces

¶5. (SBU) Former president Nestor Kirchner used his first public remarks since leaving office to slam the United States, saying it was "shameful" what the U.S. was doing to Argentina, adding that "this is not a colony." Like his wife's Mercosur statements, Kirchner's remarks at a December 18 lunch for a local utility were immediately broadcast and reported on major media websites.

¶6. (SBU) Recalling that the Ambassador had said "relations with Argentina are good," Kirchner countered, "I am saying to

him that they are not good, with what they are doing to us." He reiterated GOA insinuations that the Miami arrests were motivated by Washington's concern about the creation of Chavez-inspired Banco del Sur, the consolidation of Mercosur, and Argentina's economic policy framework. "They're also worried that we condemn terrorism but do not accept the violations of human rights such as those that occur at Guantanamo, which is shameful."

¶7. (SBU) Calling again for the U.S. to extradite Antonini, Kirchner said, "Send us the fugitive. Argentines want to know the truth about what happened." Kirchner also said "Argentines are getting bruised by a bunch of gangsters."

WAYNE